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President welcomes more Chinese investments in Egypt

Sisi calls for boosting co-operation with China's leading companies

Gazette staff

PRESIDENT Abdel Fattah El Sisi met in Beijing yesterday Zheng Xuexuan, Chairman of China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC)), along with a number of senior CSCEC officials.

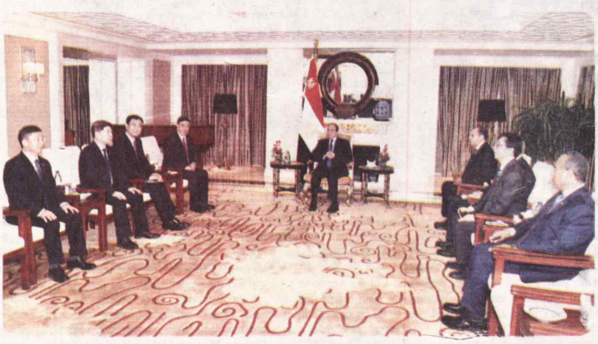
The meeting was held on the sidelines of the president's state visit to China.

"The president reviewed developments in Egypt's infrastructure sector over recent years, which witnessed great opportunities for foreign investors to pump more investments across the country," the presidential spokesman said in a statement yesterday, pointing out to the government's keenness for luring Chinese companies to increase their investments in Egypt for the benefit of both countries.

He voiced Egypt's deep appreciation for CSCEC's efforts across various projects nationwide.

"The meeting also discussed efforts to implement joint projects between the two sides, as well as new co-operation proposals. CSCEC's officials have praised Egypt's booming development in terms of construction and infrastructure," the spokesman said, asserting the state's interest in benefiting from Chinese expertise in this field.

He has said CSCEC is keen on continuing co-operation at all levels and to carry out more projects for the best interests of both sides.



PRESIDENT Abdel Fattah El Sisi during a meeting with leading heads of Chinese companies in Beijing yestreday.

Boosting co-operation with CEEC

President Sisi also met with Hailiang Song, Chairman of China Energy Engineering Corp (CEEC), during his state visit to China.

"The president stressed the state's keenness to increase Chinese investments and to boost co-operation with Chinese companies operating in Egypt, especially of China Energy Engineering Corp, as Cairo values the present co-operation relations with the company and its participation in a number of major projects," the presidential spokesman said.

The spokesman said President Sisi stressed Egypt's interest in bolstering co-ordination and co-operation with the Chinese company in a bid to benefit from its expertise and strong potentials.

"Egypt welcomes of the company's endeavour to expand the scope of its projects in Egypt, especially facilities related to green hydrogen. Moreover, Egypt is keen on localising industries and technology as well as training local workers," the presidential spokesman said, citing the creation of new job opportunities in Egypt.

"In this context, the two sides discussed proposals for new projects available for joint co-operation, as well as means to scale up efforts to complete underway joint projects.

For his part, Hailiang Song praised present co-operation between his company and Egypt, describing the North African country as the most promising market in terms of energy and green hydrogen.

CEEC chairman has made it clear that the company "is determined to continue" developing joint co-operation for the best interests of both sides.

(Read feature story on Egypt-China relations on P.2)

News briefs

Saudi Arabia eyes $13.1b from Aramco share sale

SAUDI Arabia's government may raise $13,1 billion from Aramco share sale this week. The Saudi authorities have filed papers to sell a new stake in state oil giant Aramco, a landmark deal to help fund Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's plan to diversify the economy.

In the main part of the deal, Saudi Arabia could raise $12 billion by offering about 1.545 billion Aramco shares, equivalent to about 0.64% of the company, if it prices the sale at the top end of a 26.7 ($7.12) to 29 riyals range, according to Aramco's filing on Riyadh's Saudi Exchange.

The deal's value could rise to $13.1 billion at the top end under a so-called greenshoe option which would allow the sale of nearly 1.7 billion shares, or a 0.7% stake. That option allows bankers to use shares to stabilize the price of the offering.

Oil falls as Fed policymakers mull rate cuts

OIL prices fell early yesterday as investors responded to comments from US Fed officials who said it was too soon to start considering rate cuts, and following a surprise build in US gasoline stocks that weighed on the market.

Brent futures lost 12 cents, or 0.15%, to trade at $81.74 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was down 17 cents, or 0.22%, at $77.74.

Dallas Federal Reserve President Lorie Logan said she is still worried about upside risks to inflation despite recent easing, warning that the US central bank needs to be flexible and keep "all options on the table" as it watches data and determines how to respond.

US crude oil inventories fell 4.2 million barrels to 454.7 million barrels in the week ending on May 24, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) said, compared with expectations in a **Reuters** poll for a 1.9 million-barrel draw.

China's factory activity unexpectedly dips

CHINA'S manufacturing activity unexpectedly fell in May, keeping alive calls for fresh stimulus as a protracted property crisis in the world's second-largest economy continues to weigh on business, consumer and investor confidence.

The official manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) dropped to 49.5 in May from 50.4 in April, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said yesterday, below the 50-mark separating growth from contraction and missing analysts' forecast of 50.4, according to **Reuters**.



Egypt's hotel rooms to hit 250,000

Gazette staff

EGYPT'S hotel capacity is expected to add 5,000 rooms in North Coast on the backdrop of investments exceeding LE30 billion. A $35 billion deal, which was signed between the Egyptian government and the United Arab Emirates in February, to develope Ras El-Hekma City, west of Alexandria, has attracted investors to increase hotel capacity in North Coast. Egypt's Ministry of Tourism expects more than 25,000 new hotel rooms begin operations by the end of 2024, bringing the capacity to about 250,000 rooms, up from 222,000 rooms at the beginning of 2024.

Egypt's tourism revenues rose by 4.8 per cent to $4.3 billion between January and April this year, up from $4.1 billion on the same period in 2023.

A total of 4.6 million tourists visited Egypt on the January-April period, according to data from the Ministry of Tourism.

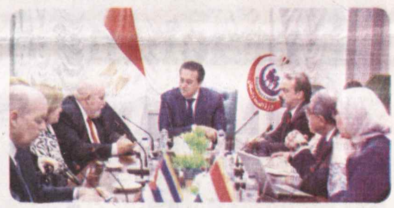
Minister: State eyes partnerships with private sector

Gazette staff

MINISTER of State for Military Production, Mohamed Salah Eddin Moustafa, said yesterday his ministry and its affiliated companies are keen on co-operating with the local and global private sector in all fields of manufacturing in line with directives of President Abdel Fattah El Sisi.

The minister's remarks were made during a meeting in Cairo with Sudipta Bhattacharya, CEO of Adani Group. Moustafa and Bhattacharya discussed aspects of joint co-operation at the headquarters of the Ministry of Military Production in the New Administrative Capital.

Egypt is working on upgrading its manufacturing and technological potentials in a bid to boost sustainable development.



MoU signed between ACDIMA, BioCubaFarma

Gazette staff

A MEMORANDUM of understanding (MoU) was signed yesterday between the Arab Company for Drug Industries and Medical Appliances (ACDIMA) and the Cuban company BioCubaFarma with a view to boosting bilateral co-operation in pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries.

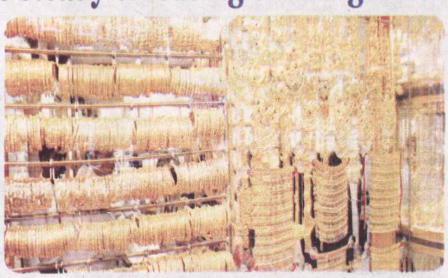
This came on the sidelines of a meeting between Minister of Health Dr Khaled Abdel Ghaffar and Cuban Ambassador to Egypt Manuel Javier Rubido, Director of the Centre for State Control of Medicines and Medical Devices (CECMED) Olga Lidia Jacobo-Casanueva, President of the Export-Import Company Armando Garrido and Vice President of BioCubaFarma Mayda Mauri Pérez.

The minister said that the Cuban delegation visited a number of local pharmaceutical factories. They also signed a co-operation agreement that includes registering the Egyptian-made insulin drug in Cuba, given the high quality of pharmaceutical products in Egypt.

The Cuban ambassador invited Minister Abdel Ghaffar to attend the International Conference on Medical and Health Sciences, slated for February 2025, at Havana, Cuba.

Local gold prices steady on easing exchange rate

Gazette staff



GOLD prices were steady in Egypt yesterday on easing foreign exchange rate. The 21-karat and 24-karat gold sold for LE3,115 and LE3,650 respectively, traders said.

The gold sovereign price fell to LE24,920 for selling, and LE24,760 for buying, according to market data. Bullion is known as an inflation hedge, but higher rates increase the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding gold.

Meanwhile, global gold prices edged up yesterday and were on track for a fourth straight monthly gain, while investors awaited a key US inflation reading that could provide further insights into the Federal Reserve's policy path.

Spot gold was up 0.2 per cent at $2,346.18 per ounce. Bullion prices are up 0.5 per cent so far this week. US gold futures rose 0.1 per cent at $2,345.20.

Gold prices have gained 2.7 per cent so far this month after hitting a record high of $2,449.89 on May 20.

Fed policymakers continue to expect inflation to fall this year even as the labour market stays strong, leaving them in no hurry to cut the policy rate from the 5.25 per cent-5.5 per cent range they have kept it in since last July.

Traders' bets signalled growing skepticism that the Fed will cut rates more than once in 2024, currently pricing in about a 64 per cent chance of a rate cut by November, according to the CME FedWatch Tool.

Russian mining and metals giant Nornickel lowered its forecast for the global nickel surplus this year, but said it expected a bigger global palladium deficit.

Days after miner BHP launched its takeover bid for rival Anglo American AAL.L in April, the CEOs of both headed for South Africa, where a condition to divest Anglo's local platinum and iron ore assets was causing a political storm.

Spot silver fell 0.2 per cent to $31.11 per ounce, platinum was down 0.2 per cent at $1,022.70 and palladium lost 0.2 per cent to $946.25.

1st wounded Gazan treated in Lebanon hospital



BEIRUT (News Wires) – Five-year-old Adam Afana dreamt of being a police officer "to keep people safe," his uncle said, before losing his father, his siblings and cousins, and nearly all of his left arm in an Israeli strike seven months ago on Gaza.

Now, Adam is the first Palestinian child wounded in Israel's war in Gaza to land in Lebanon, where he has been receiving care since Monday at the American University of Beirut's Medical Centre with help from the Ghassan Abu Sittah Children's Fund.

Egypt, China scale up economic, investment co-operation

Gazette staff



CHINA has invested billions of dollars in Egypt's national development projects, including the Suez Canal Economic Zone and the New Administrative Capital, east of Cairo.

EGYPT and China have signed a number of agreements to deepen their co-operation during President Abdel-Fattah El Sisi's visit to Beijing last week.

The president, accompanied by Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukri, witnessed the signing of these agreements with Chinese President Xi Jinping in a ceremony that coincided with the 10th anniversary of the Egypt-China comprehensive strategic partnership.

The agreements include collaboration in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which brings Chinese companies to build Chinese-funded transportation, energy, and infrastructure projects overseas.

China invested billions of dollars in Egypt's national development projects, including the Suez Canal Economic Zone and the New Administrative Capital, east of Cairo.

Egyptian-Chinese joint investments totaled $14 billion in 2023, compared to $16.6 billion in 2022, according to data from the state-run Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS).

Egypt and China have a long history of diplomatic relations, dating back to the 1950s. Egypt was the first Arab and African nation to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1956.

In December 2014, shortly after taking office, President Sisi made an official visit to China where he met President XI and signed a comprehensive strategic partnership (CSP) agreement, which has inaugurated a new era of enhanced bilateral relations between the two countries.

Since 2014, President Sisi has visited China several times, during which the two countries signed a substantial number of bilateral agreements. According to CAPMAS, the volume of trade between Egypt and China increased from $11.9 billion in early 2022 to $13 billion in early 2023, an increase of 9.8 per cent in just one year.

Egypt is the largest recipient of Chinese investments in the Arab world. China's investments in Egypt have reached nearly $7 billion, 90 per cent of which were pumped over the past five years, providing around 40,000 jobs, according to a statement by the Chinese Embassy in Cairo.

Chinese companies have invested billions of dollars in infrastructure projects in Egypt, including the construction of the New Administrative Capital as well as power plants and industrial zones.

Chinese media said China's keenenss to strengthen its relations with Egypt should also be viewed through the prism of China's massive BRI. For example, the Suez Canal and Trade Co-operation Zone (SETC-Zone), established in 2008, is considered a key project that significantly serves the BRI due to its location and logistical capabilities.

The SETC-Zone is a major hub for Chinese products, boasting 102 Chinese companies, $1.2 billion of investments, 30,000 new jobs, and over $2.5 billion in sales, according to China's National Development and Reform Commission.

"There are huge Chinese projects in Egypt, and China is Egypt's first trading partner, in addition to its huge investments in Egypt," Finance Minister Mohamed Maeet said in recent press remarks.

Maeet said China's mega investments, mainly in Egypt's New Administrative Capital and the Suez Canal Economic Zone, notably contribute to boosting the Egyptian economy.

"We are partners with China in the Belt and Road Initiative, the BRICS group and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, all of this is in the common interest of the two countries," Maeet noted, referring to Egypt's issuance of sustainable panda bonds in the Chinese financial market as a testament to bilateral co-operation.

Minister of Public Business Sector Mahmoud Esmat has recently said that there are 36 economic projects on which the ministry is currently co-operating with the private sector, adding that many of these projects involve large Chinese companies.

Esmat revealed that the ministry has been working to highlight investment opportunities in Egypt to attract local and international investors, especially Chinese investors. According to him, Egypt opens the door for Chinese investments and trade with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

China-Egypt relations

China and Egypt, among the world's most ancient civilisations, have had friendly relations for a long time. At the pivotal 1955 Afro-Asian Bandung Conference in Indonesia, the former Chinese premier Zhou Enlai and late Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser established the foundation for contemporary Sino-Egyptian relations.

Since then, Egypt has increasingly gained relevance in the Chinese government's Middle Eastern strategy and is seen as a key force with strategic importance in the Arab world, Africa, and developing countries.

Egypt was the first nation from Africa, the Middle East, and the Arab world to forge official diplomatic ties with China in 1956.

Mobile theatres: Tool for cultural justice reaching out to remote communities

Hagar Saeed



MOBILE theatres have been a tool by the Ministry of Culture in recent years to bring cultural activities to areas with limited facilities in a bid to bridge the cultural gap between people living in big cities and those in remote governorates.

THE concept of a mobile theatre that moves closer to people and abolish the barriers between artists and the audience has been developed by the Egyptian Ministry of Culture as part of a plan to disseminate arts and culture and reach to the remotest villages across the nation.

Last week, the ministry received eight new mobile theatres that were built by the State Ministry of Military Production.

The new theatres, according to Minister of Culture Nevine el-Kilani, will be touring the villages covered by the presidential initiative "Decent Life", aiming to reshape awareness and spread enlightenment through various creative programmes including all forms of culture and art.

They are part of the second phase of the Mobile Theatre initiative.

Under first phase of the initiative which started in January 2021, six mobile theatres toured the governorates of Cairo, Beheira, Daqahlia, South Sinai, Aswan and Assiut, offering theatrical performances in 26 villages, Minister el-Kilani said.

The performances witnessed a huge public turnout, reaching an average of 2,000 spectators for each village. The Mobile Theatre initiative aims to reach 250 villages in 18 governorates, she added.

El-Kilani noted that the mobile theatres were completely built by Egyptian hands.

They were manufactured at the Helwan Diesel Engines Company (Factory 909), affiliated to the Ministry of Military Production. They are fully equipped with electricity, water services, control panels, sound and light equipment, air-conditioned control rooms, and four tents designed as dressing rooms for artists.

"By bringing numerous cultural activities and artistic performances to areas which have the least access to arts and cultural activities, the project aims to invigorate the scene of creativity across the nation, and to achieve cultural justice, " Amr Basyouni, Head of the General Organisation of Cultural Palaces, told the local media.

"The first phase of the Mobile Theatre initiative was a great success. There was much interaction from the local audience. Children were extremely thrilled. It was such a rich experience and a good source of positive energy, " Basyouni added.

People in each and every corner of this country should have access to arts and culture, he stressed, noting that the mobile theatre project is part of the Ministry of Culture's efforts over recent years, to bridge the cultural gap between city dwellers and those living in remote regions.

Basyouni referred to other initiatives adopted by the Ministry of Culture for the same elevated purpose.

In 2018, the "People of Egypt" programme was launched to organise cultural activities aiming at building bridges between children and youth living in remote governorates and those in the capital and the Delta. The programme organises, for example, trips to museums and archaeological sites across Egypt for school children and youth living in remote areas to show them the riches outside their neighbourhoods. The programme also works on honing handcraft skills of women living in these remote areas, far from the capital.

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Ukrainian Airlines (Aero Svit): 27354363

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Museums

Egyptian Museum: 23956462 – 25782452
Museum of Islamic Ceramics: 27373298
Islamic Museum: 23901520
Coptic Museum: 23628766
Museum of Egyptian Modern Art: 27366667
Abdin Palace Museum: 23910042
Mahmoud Mukhtar Museum: 27352519

Galleries

Picasso Gallery, Zamalek: 25736544
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Growing awareness over rationalisation of water consumption

PRESIDENT Abdel Fattah El Sisi's call to rationalise consumption of irrigation water has received positive response in society. Water experts and ordinary citizens are collaborating to debate the most efficient methods to conserve water and maintain "water security". The media has also been invited to take part and highlight the public debate in this respect. A national campaign is suggested to help increase public awareness regarding the dimensions of the problem and how the challenges can be overcome. Water conservation for the future generation is also stressed.

President El Sisi's wake-up call came as he was inaugurating last week, via the video-conference, the main giant water lifting station in Toskha city. The project aims to address the challenges linked to inefficient water supplies, inequality in water access and high pumping costs.

The President's alert coincided with state efforts to increase the agricultural land in desert areas by more than two million feddans, taking into account that the agriculture sector is vital for Egypt's economic growth. It employs 30% of the workforce in rural areas and provides livelihoods for 55 per cent of the population.

Egypt relies almost completely on the Nile River for the majority of its freshwater resources. But, while supply stayed constant, the demand for water increased substantially over the years and is expected to continue to do so in the future.

Rapid population growth and climate change and the state plans to expand the area of the agricultural land have increased worries over water scarcity in Egypt as the country is facing annual water deficit of around seven billion cubic metres.

Egyptian families should be encouraged to play the leading role in the realisation of water security.

The proposed awareness-increasing campaign should draw the attention of households that, by reducing water consumption, they will augment indirectly the family budget when they save money on their water bills. Schoolchildren should also be encouraged to have better understanding of the state's campaign to rationalise water consumption. They should be aware that they are committing themselves to their national duty when they take part in this campaign.

The Egyptian Gazette welcomes comments and views our esteemed readers may wish to forward for publishing purposes. Such contributions should be written in no more than 200 words and e-mailed to ***info@egyptian-gazette.com.*** Comments are subject to editorial evaluation and abridgement if need be.

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The Africa We Want

Abdelmonem Fawzi

Remove historical injustice

"**FRIENDS**, get rid of all those ugly sounds," Ludwig van Beethoven said in his Ninth Symphony.

Beethoven's performance was in Vienna in May 1824. The context of the performance was considered a powerful symbol of solidarity; social equality; peace, and human values. It was understood as an act of resistance.

The same symphony can also act as a cry against the current genocide against the Palestinian people.

However, the aggravating calamity of the Palestinians just proves that those who should make peace are becoming the bane of this peace.

The situation in the Palestinian territories is becoming alarming. In fact, it continues to deteriorate.

Obviously, the Security Council has become dysfunctional. Even before the current crisis, the council had never been fully functional.

At the height of the Cold War, bilateral contacts and negotiations between the two super powers of the time were what brought the war to an end.

At the end, the lack of trust in the potential of multilateral solutions is growing. The five permanent members of the council, which should contribute to world peace and security, have indeed become the source of the problem.

The veto power allows these countries to enjoy special privileges. This power helped them evade their responsibility towards world peace and security.

The realities of the 21st century call for reforming and expanding the Security Council. This reform and expansion has to reverse the historical injustice done Africa by denying the continent permanent seats in the council.

As the momentum towards a new Pact of the Future is buzzing on the continent, the African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) organized a virtual consultation on the Common African Position on the UN Security Council reforms, in collaboration with several bodies, including CSOs and the AUC-PAPS & the PANPAPS CSOs/Think-Tanks on AU C-10 UNSC Reform, Media and Academia.

The consultation aimed to support and popularize the Ezulwini Consensus, a position on international relations and reform of the United Nations, agreed by the African Union.

The Common African Position on the UNSC Reform was adopted by the AU Member States in 2005 and it calls for allocating two seats in the permanent category with all its prerogatives and privileges, including the right of veto, and additional three non-permanent ones.

The consultation came ahead of the ministerial meeting in Algiers, Algeria, next month.

The African Position on the UNSC Reform led to the establishment of a committee of ten Heads of State and Government (known as the C-10), which is coordinated by the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The C-10 has been at the forefront of efforts for the implementation of the African Common Position.

During the consultation, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) of the African Union stated that the union has been a fundamental actor in the enforcement of peace and security on the continent.

However, the challenges posed by Africa's limited representation in the UNSC restrict the AU's ability to deliver effective and concrete conflict resolution. He added that the quest for the UN Security Council Reform is a legitimate demand as we make effort to support conflict resolution in Africa.

It is impossible to disassociate this quest from peace operations, largely concentrated on the continent and implemented by the UN Security Council, he said.

During recent decades, Africa has been the main topic dealt with by the UNSC.

Interaction between Africa and the UN's main decision-making forum is currently vital for addressing and resolving conflicts on the continent.

Ambassador Bankole also highlighted latest developments on the implementation of the roadmap, which was adopted in November 2023 in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

It remains to be said that the world is in a state of economic and social chaos and undergoing radical and disruptive changes at an accelerating speed.

In the meantime, we realise that efforts are continuing at the United Nations by various groups among whom are the Africa Group, the group calling itself United for Consensus and the Group of Four, to promote their interests by securing positions in the Security Council.

The problem is that the hands of member states are tied by Article 108 and 109 of the Charter which make it impossible to amend the Charter without the consent of the Permanent Five.

Article 109 allows the convening of a general conference by a two-thirds vote of members for reviewing the present Charter, but as in Article 108, any change of the Present Charter requires agreement by all members of the Security Council.

The key question is that will the Permanent Five allow amendments of the Charter to proceed despite the creation of an impression to the contrary?

Let us be honest, we are not in good shape to build a united approach in matters of world affairs and speak with one voice, especially where there is a strong national interest, such as security issues and conflict situations.

Our demand, our wishes and our recommendations would be taken seriously when we also work hard in putting our house in order.

There is no other way to ensure that our interests are promoted or protected.

Could AI one day be a whistleblower?

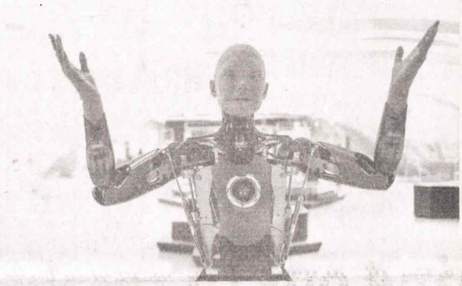
Max Voldman

OF all the jobs that have been on the radar for ruin at the hands of artificial intelligence (AI)—Truck driver? Personal assistant? Flight attendant, even?—one profession that most people did not imagine might find competition at the hands of new technology is "whistleblower." If anything, it's been whistleblowers who have been clanging the bell about the dangers of AI. But in fact, AI is a technology that in this case, could be used for good. It could be just the right tool for detecting certain kinds of fraud that corporations and others have become highly skilled at covering up from employees or the government.

The typical whistleblower under the law has historically been a corporate insider privy to details of the fraud. But companies' intent on duping the government have come up with countless tactics to evade detection, often siloing employees from each other so no individual, or small group, can piece together enough about the fraud to file suit.

Despite efforts to stop it, defrauding the government remains a booming industry. The government estimates that roughly 15 per cent of pandemic-related unemployment benefits paid, over $100 billion, were lost to fraud. That's just the tip of the iceberg.

While Covid-19 was, hopefully, a generational pandemic, the government loses nearly that much money to Medicare and Medicaid fraud annually. Those figures will only grow as health care costs continue to skyrocket. And that doesn't even begin to address all the other projects and industries where the government doles out massive sums, all vulnerable to fraud. To name a few: infrastructure funding, defense contracts, education financing, and agriculture have all been targeted by fraudsters.



A humanoid robot staff greet visitors at an exhibition in Dubai's Museum of the Future, United Arab Emirates.

But AI is poised to change that by cutting across departments and systems to gain a fuller picture of practices that may amount to fraud.

Both the government and whistleblowers are already using statistics to identify fraud suspects and file suits alleging that, mathematically, fraud is the only explanation to patterns detected in data. But AI's rapidly developing speed and complexity will allow it to analyse datasets well beyond the most complex prevalence analysis. Instead, it will be able to detect patterns based on multiple variables, compare recognised patterns to estimates, and perhaps even predict anticipated behavior. All of this means AI has the potential to forecast fraud.

The logical starting point in AI fraud prevention is the health care industry, which is known for its large, well-kept data sets. But the AI technology has potential fraud projection applications far beyond health care. Large language models could be used to analyse emails or other large collections of text, detecting suspicious activities, and even exposing existing efforts to keep fraud under wraps, such as the use of code words. AI may gain the ability to conduct advanced materials testing—think scanning metal, concrete, and welds for density, rust, and other physical characteristics—which would allow it to detect frauds concerning deficient physical items like military equipment, or civilian roads and bridges. And, somewhat ironically, as the government contracts to purchase more and more AI technology, that very AI will be a tool to judge whether the government is getting what it was promised.

AI can not only help would-be whistleblowers detect and anticipate fraud with great precision; it also opens the door to new categories of whistleblowers. No longer will visibility be limited to company insiders and the like. There are many uniquely situated parties that observe a limited aspect of a fraud, such as hospitals and insurers that see only certain portions of each other's data when the full picture would reveal fraud, or subsidiary military contractors that have a window to only some of the prime contractor's fraudulent behavior. Currently, these parties may be stymied from bringing a suit by a lack of detail. As AI develops, it can fill those holes.

As with any technology with great potential, there is also risk. Patterns that are merely rare might be flagged as potentially fraudulent, possibly leading to expensive and burdensome investigations. Fraud detection software can also simply malfunction, or be programmed incorrectly, leading to miscarriages of justice. A heartbreaking example of this happened in the U.K., where a mail-tracking software had faulty design and implicitly accused hundreds of postal workers of theft, leading to hundreds of baseless prosecutions.

As the technology develops, additional AI applications in the fight against fraud are sure to become evident. Perhaps one day, AI could be a whistleblower in its own right (or, alternatively ... try to destroy humanity). Whistleblowers are already indispensable to the government's recovery of tens of billions of dollars that would have otherwise been forever lost to fraud, and their efforts have likely deterred hundreds of billions more. AI should be on whistleblowers' radar as a tool that will make them even more effective.

Newsweek

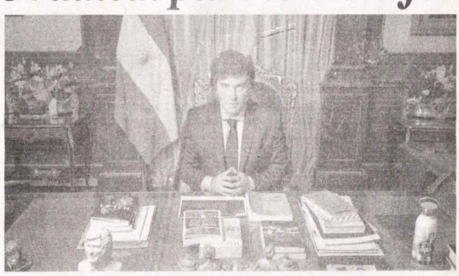
Javier Milei's radical plan to transform Argentina

Vera Bergengruen

PRESIDENT Javier Milei hates his new office. The Casa Rosada, with its historic blue chair and ornate paneled walls, feels tainted by his predecessors, who he believes drove Argentina into ruin. But there is one detail Milei loves. Engraved into a fireplace mantle is a bronze lion, the animal he adopted as a symbol during his dizzying rise to power. Showing me around the vast second-floor space, Milei gestures to a blown-up photo of the lion, propped on his desk as a totem of his destiny. "He was waiting for me here," he says.

Milei may be the world's most eccentric head of state. Not long ago, he was a libertarian economist and TV pundit known as El Loco—the madman—for his profane outbursts. The oddities of his campaign often overshadowed the stark austerity program he promoted to pull the country out of its economic crisis. Milei, who has bragged about being a tantric sex guru, brandished a chainsaw at rallies to symbolise his plans to slash government spending, dressed up as a superhero who sang about fiscal policy, and told voters that his five cloned English mastiffs, which he reportedly consults in telepathic conversations, are his "best strategists." He pledged to eliminate the nation's central bank, derided climate change as a socialist conspiracy, and assailed Pope Francis, the first Argentine Pontiff, as a "leftist son of a bitch." Last November, he won in a landslide.

The unlikely ascendance of a self-described "anarcho-capitalist" reflects the strength of a right-wing populist movement that has won elections around the world in recent years. Like his counterparts from Italy to Hungary, Brazil to Peru, the U.S. to India, Milei vowed to dismantle a corruption-riddled state ruled by shadowy elites. "Let it all blow up, let the economy blow up, and take this entire garbage political caste down with it," he said during the campaign. But none of his counterparts is quite like Milei, with his volcanic temper, mad scientist's bearing—he claims not to comb his wild mop of hair because the "invisible hand of the market" does it for him—and messianic streak. And none of them leads a nation like Argentina, a resource-rich regional power plagued by decades of political mismanagement and economic instability, which has now become a test case for the governing theories of a radical ideologue. "Crossing from the laboratory into the real world is marvelous," he says with a broad grin. "It's fantastic!"



PRESIDENT of Argentina, Javier Milei.

Since taking office, Milei, 53, has frozen public-works projects, devalued the peso by more than 50%, and announced plans to lay off more than 70,000 government workers. So far, he sees signs that his economic "shock therapy" is working. Inflation has slowed for four months in a row. The International Monetary Fund has hailed Argentina's "impressive" progress. Two days before we sat down on April 25 for an hour-long interview, he had given an address to the nation celebrating the "economic miracle" of the country's first quarterly budget surplus since 2008. Milei thinks he is pioneering an approach that will become a global blueprint. "Argentina will become a model for how to transform a country into a prosperous nation," he tells me. "I have no doubt."

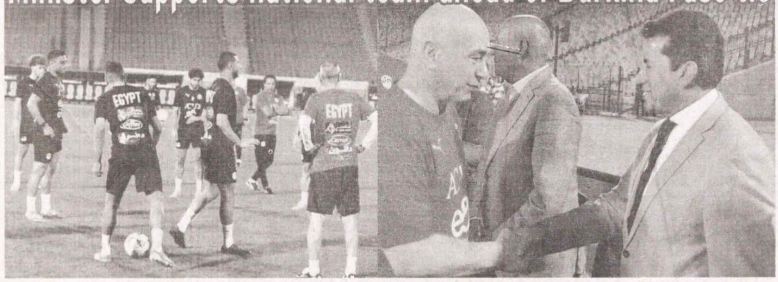
Others do. While Milei vowed the "political caste" would bear the brunt, his austerity measures have pummeled ordinary Argentines. The annual inflation rate is still nearly 300%, among the highest in the world. Many Argentines have been forced to carry bags of cash for even small transactions; some stores have given up on price stickers entirely. Milei's moves—cutting federal aid, transport and energy subsidies, and getting rid of price controls—have caused living costs to spike. More than 55% of Argentines are mired in poverty, up from 45% in December. Milei may be running out of time before his popular support crumbles. "Everybody knew the cost would be huge," says Argentina's Foreign Minister Diana Mondino, a close adviser. "What we're experiencing, nobody likes it. But there's no other way."

Argentina's economy has been bad enough for long enough that polls show a majority of the nation's 46 million people remain willing to give Milei a chance. Yet it's not clear the iconoclastic new President is interested in forging the political alliances required to push his sweeping structural reforms through Argentina's legislature. There are also signs that Milei has misread the scope of his mandate. He won by presenting himself as an antidote to political and economic mismanagement. But it's clear he also sees himself as part of a broader cultural battle. He has embarked on an international speaking tour, casting himself as a global crusader against socialism, attacking everything from gender-equity laws to climate activists. And in a nation still haunted by the legacy of its brutal military dictatorship of the 1970s and '80s, Milei's broadsides against the press and threats against political "traitors" can take on an authoritarian cast. "Much of the support for Milei was for his economic program, not his libertarian vision or anti-woke agenda," says Benjamin Gedan, director of the Wilson Centre's Latin America Program. "But his view is, 'You wanted me, and you got me. And I'll plow ahead.'"

Time

DISCLAIMER: *Opinions expressed by writers and readers on this page don't necessarily reflect the newspaper's views, unless otherwise stated.*

Minister supports national team ahead of Burkina Faso tie



EGYPT'S Minister of Youth and Sports Ashraf Sobhi witnessed the training of the national football team in preparation for their match against Burkina Faso at Cairo International Stadium at 10:00 PM Cairo Local Time on June 6, as part of the third round of the qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup.

"We fully support the national team, including all its players and the coaching staff led by Hossam Hassan, in the upcoming national mission," Sobhi said.

The Pharaohs have been placed in Group A alongside Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Sierra Leone.

"We wish them all the best in winning both matches, maintaining their group lead, and continuing the recent successes of Egyptian sports, which have been crowned with the CAF Champions League and Confederation Cup titles, as well as achieving championships in individual and team sports across all levels," the top official added.

Sobhi noted that everything necessary will be provided to ensure the team's successful qualification for the World Cup and to showcase a performance that reflects the progress of Egyptian football under the leadership of President Abdel Fattah El Sisi.

He also expressed his confidence in the capabilities of the players and the coaching staff to meet the aspirations of the Egyptian fans.

The minister called on all Egyptian fans, regardless of their affiliations, to support the national team against Burkina Faso next Thursday from the Stadium.

Currently, they lead Group A with six points from two games played. They secured win in their first two qualifying matches against Djibouti 6-0 in the first round and Sierra Leone 2-0 in the second round.

He emphasised that the appropriate environment will be provided to support the coaching staff led by Hassan.

Meanwhile, Mohamed Salah has been included in Egypt's squad for this month's crucial 2026 World Cup qualifiers against Niger and Djibouti.

The Liverpool star missed the Pharaohs' friendlies in March due to injury but is back in the fold as Egypt aim to strengthen their grip on Group A. Salah's return is a major boost for Hassan, who also hands a first senior call-up to Ibrahim Adel after the Pyramids winger starred for the U-23 side that reached last year's Africa Cup of Nations final.

However, there is no place in the 26-man squad for Al-Ahly full-back Omar Kamal, who featured regularly under former boss Carlos Queiroz. Egypt currently top their qualifying section with six points from wins over Djibouti and Sierra Leone last November.

But with only the group winners guaranteed to progress automatically to the 2026 finals in the USA, Canada and Mexico, Hassan knows his side cannot afford any slip-ups.

The record seven-time African champions host Niger in Cairo on 15 June before heading to Djibouti City four days later as they look to open up a commanding advantage at the top of Group A.

Salah will be desperate to play a leading role on his return after an injury-disrupted second half of the season at Anfield.

Gebrhiwet triumphs in Oslo League

OSLO, Norway (News Wires) — Ethiopia's Hagos Gebrhiwet won the men's 5,000 metres in the second fastest time in history with a sizzling final lap in the Oslo Diamond League meet at Bislett Stadium.

The 30-year-old, whose last major global medal on the track was bronze at the 2016 Rio Olympics, passed team mate Yomif Kejelcha with one lap remaining to cross in 12 minutes 36.73 seconds, clocking a blistering 54.99 seconds on his final lap.

"The time I achieved is very nice," said Gebrhiwet, who narrowly missed Ugandan Joshua Cheptegei's world record of 12:35.36.

"The conditions, the crowd was great and it was a very fast race, not easy for me but it was going very well.

"The race had some very nice guys running – my friend Kejelcha is a very good guy. I train alone and we did our own race but we are the same country so we are both happy," Gebrhiwet added according to **Reuters.**

Akani Simbine of South Africa sprinted to victory in the men's 100m in 9.94 seconds, just off the season's fastest time of 9.93 set by Americans Christian Miller and Kendal Williams.

Japan's Abdul Hakim Sani Brown was second in 9.99 while Emmanuel Eseme of Cameroon ran 10.01 for third.

Olympic champion Lamont Marcell Jacobs was fourth in 10.03, while Britain's Jeremiah Azu, who cracked the 10-second barrier for the first time in his career five days earlier, suffered an injury when leading mid-race and limped to the finish line.

American Brittany Brown won the women's 200m, clocking 22.32 out of lane 8, while world champion Shericka Jackson's early-season struggles continued.

Jamaica's Jackson, the second fastest woman ever over the distance, finished fifth in 22.97, well off the 21.41 she clocked last season and slightly slower than her season-opener two weeks ago.

Britain's Matthew Hudson-Smith won the men's 400m in 44.07 – second fastest in the world this season – to break his own European record.

"The time didn't matter in a way as I care about victories rather than times and preparing for the Olympics," he said ahead of the Paris Games starting on July 26.



Hagos Gebrhiwet

Saso leads US Open after Korda meltdown

LANCASTER – World No 1 Nelly Korda's hopes of a third major title imploded with a spectacular first-round meltdown at the US Women's golf Open as former champion Yuka Saso overcame brutal conditions to take a one-shot lead.

The 25-year-old American now faces an uphill struggle to even make the cut after carding a 10-over-par 80 – the highest score of her LPGA Tour career – during a hellish opening 18 holes.

Korda took a 10 on her third hole of the US Women's golf Open in Pennsylvania when she hit three short-game shots into the stream in front of the par-3 12th green.

"Making a 10 on a par 3 will definitely not do you any good at a US Open," Korda said according to **AP**.

It was a devastating start for the No. 1 player in US Women's golf, a course that already was playing difficult enough that birdies were hard to find.

"Just a bad day in the office." Korda came into the US Women's Open as an overwhelming favourite, with six victories in her last seven tournaments, including a major that tied an LPGA record for five wins in a row. That's what made the most imperfect 10 so shocking.

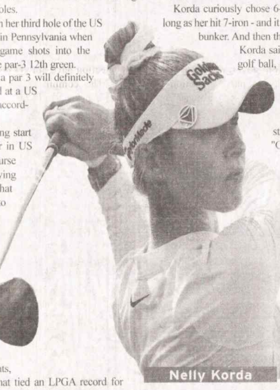
It didn't help that two groups were on the tee at the 161-yard 12th hole - Korda had about a 25-minute wait - and she watched trouble unfold before she pulled a club. In the group ahead, Gaby Lopez came up short of the water. Ingrid Lindblad's tee shot rolled into the water.

Korda curiously chose 6-iron - most players not as long as her hit 7-iron - and it took a hard hop into a back bunker. And then the trouble began.

Korda said she had a leaf under her golf ball, and the bunker shot came out a little hot and rolled - and rolled - past the front pin, off the false front and disappeared into the stream.

"Couldn't really do anything about that," she said. "Yeah, just hit some really bad chips, over and over again."

She played a low pitch up the slope, but it banged into the hill and rolled back down into the water. She took another penalty drop, played another low pitch that was only slightly better, still not nearly enough to avoid rolling back into the water.


Nelly Korda

Real eyes new Champions League dynasty

LONDON – Real Madrid will face Borussia Dortmund in the UEFA Champions League final at Wembley Stadium today with Carlo Ancelotti's side seeking to add another chapter to the club's already astonishing love affair with European soccer's elite trophy.

Bidding for a record-extending 15th European Cup and sixth in 10 years, they want to emulate Real's dominance at the dawn of the competition when, during the Alfredo Di Stefano years, they won the first five editions from 1956 and another in 1966, **Reuters** reported.

But after the group of Di Stefano, Ferenc Puskas, Paco Gento and Raymond Kopa established Real as 'The Kings of Europe', it took the club 32 painful years to reclaim their throne in 1998.

Rivals often joked about Real's European Cups all being won in black and white, but the generation of Raul, Fernando Hierro and Roberto Carlos helped Real flourish again in full colour broadcasts when they won three Champion Leagues in five seasons.

But there were then another 12 fallow years, making Real's quest for 'The 10th' an obsession for president Florentino Perez, who failed spectacularly to achieve it via his multimillion dollar 'Galacticos' approach.

Real, however, learned from their mistakes and instead of overpaying for big names past their prime, turned their attention to upcoming players on the rise, trying to develop some 'Galacticos' of their own.

They signed Toni Kroos from Bayern Munich, Sevilla's Sergio Ramos, Karim Benzema of Lyon, Gareth Bale from Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo – all under 24 and set to reach their peak during the following decade in Spain.

The club also started paying close attention to Brazil, looking for the next gem from the five-times world champions' development system. Marcelo and Casemiro signed for a bargain six million euros ($6.50 million) and became club legends.

That youthful but talented squad, under the calm guidance of Ancelotti and Zinedine Zidane, bonded as a group and connected on the pitch like a well-oiled machine to finally establish the second great dynasty Real had spent half a century looking for.

After winning a cathartic 10th European Cup led by Ancelotti in 2014, Real then won three in a row under Zidane.

Then, with Ancelotti back at the helm, they claimed another in 2022, crowning a remarkable campaign full of late comebacks that proved they were more than a team built around Ronaldo after the Portuguese left following the 2018 title in Kiev.



Djokovic, Zverev, Olga advance at French Open

PARIS (News Wires) — Defending champion Novak Djokovic, Alexander Zverev and Olga Danilovic reached the French Open third round.

Djokovic was very briefly made to work hard by unseeded Spaniard Roberto Carballes Baena before sealing a routine 6-4 6-1 6-2 victory.

Djokovic has been some way from his convincing best in an erratic season where he is bidding to win a record 25th Grand Slam title and the top-seeded Serbian was dragged into a battle by Baena after recovering an early break.

Having nosed ahead on serve in the ninth game, the 37-year-old Djokovic set up break point with a big overhead smash after a 24-shot rally and pounced to take the first set as spectators on Philippe Chatrier sensed a return to a more familiar level.

"There's always conviction and belief inside of me that I can win a Grand Slam," Djokovic said according to **Reuters**. "That's the reason I'm still competing at this level. That's why I'm here.

"At this age I wouldn't be competing at the Grand Slams and continuing to play professional tennis if I didn't believe I possess quality to go all the way to the title match. "I still of course sense that I have the game and I have the goods to go far."

Djokovic moved up a few notches in the next set for a 4-0 lead before his 31-year-old opponent even got on the board and the three-times Roland Garros champion tightened his vice-like grip on the contest in double quick time.

The pair's previous two encounters were both at hardcourt Grand Slams but the outcome was no different on Parisian clay as Djokovic sauntered ahead 5-1 in the third set and wrapped up the victory in style.

Despite the near-flawless display, Djokovic stressed that he would continue keeping expectations low as he prepares to battle Frenchman Gael Monfils or Italian Lorenzo Musetti.

"Of course, hopes and beliefs and convictions are always there, always high, and I always aim for the highest star," Djokovic said.

"I'm being conscious of the present moment and what needs to be done daily to build my form as the tournament progresses and then peak at the right time when it matters the most."

Alexander Zverev backed up his statement win against Rafael Nadal with a dominant display against David Goffin to reach the third round at Roland Garros.

The fourth-seeded German, who downed 14-time champ Nadal in straight sets in the first round, played front-foot tennis in his clash with Goffin.

He overpowered the Belgian, hitting 37 winners under the roof on Court Suzanne-Lenglen to advance after two hours and 22 minutes.

Zverev was pleased with how he reset after his emotional win against Nadal on Monday.

"Since the draw came out, the only thing the tennis world was talking about was that match [against Nadal]," Zverev said when asked about his emotions over the past week.

"He won the tournament 14 times, so he deserves all the credit and respect and all the acknowledgments he gets. So after I beat him I felt that I had already won the tournament, but in the end it is only a first round," he added according to *atptour.com*.

"You have to focus for another two weeks entirely and I am happy I had another two days off as I had to compose myself emotionally. I had to ground myself and get back to work and playing good tennis. I am extremely happy with my level."

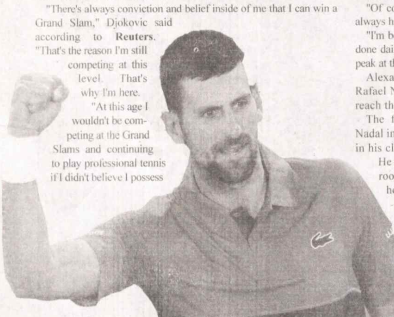
Zverev suffered a catastrophic ankle injury at the clay-court major in 2022, turning his ankle during his semi-final clash with Nadal at the end of the second set.

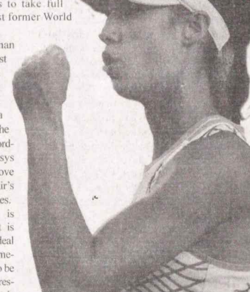
After returning to Tour last year, the 27-year-old looks back to his best, having won his sixth ATP Masters 1000 crown in Rome earlier this month.

After winning a tight first set, Zverev moved through the gears in the second and third sets to take full control against former World No. 7 Goffin.

The German committed just five unforced errors in the second set and did not face a break point in the third set, according to Infosys Stats, to improve to 4-2 in the pair's Lexus ATP series.

"When it is heavy, when it is slow, it is not ideal for me. I am someone who likes to be extremely aggressive, so when it is like that, it is not ideal," Zverev said.


Novak Djokovic


Olga Danilovic

Minnesota crowned 1st-ever Women's Hockey

LOWELL, (News Wires) — The Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL) crowned its inaugural champion when Minnesota defeated Boston 3-0 in the deciding Game 5 in Lowell, Massachusetts, following a nail-biting tournament.

Kendall Coyne Schofield once showed off her speed racing against the men in an NHL skills competition at All-Star.

The three-time Olympian chased down a rolling puck and slapped it into an empty net to seal Minnesota's victory. Liz Schepers scored to break a scoreless second-period tie, Michela Cava made it 2-0 midway through the third and Nicole Hensley stopped 17 shots for Minnesota.

Coyne Schofield added the empty netter with two minutes left, and then the captain and oldest member of the roster took the first-ever lap on the ice with the Walter Cup. "It makes me want to tear up thinking about it. She's done so much for this sport," said forward Taylor Heise according to **AP**.

"She's definitely one of the people that's helped this sport grow and one of the reasons why this arena is sold out here tonight."

Coyne Schofield, 32, was fresh off of winning the 2018 Olympic gold medal when she was invited to take part in a timed lap around the ice at the 2019 NHL All-Star Game. She finished seventh out of eight, but was a crowd favourite in an arena filled with chants of "U-S-A!"

"What was so important about that moment wasn't the skate itself. It's what happened after," she said on the ice while her teammates posed for pictures with the trophy and and her husband stood nearby holding the son she gave birth to less than a year ago.

Israel pummels Gaza as troops push into central Rafah

RAFAH/GAZA STRIP – Israeli forces yesterday struck targets across the Gaza Strip, with witnesses reporting air raids around the southern city of Rafah, the latest focus of the nearly eight-month war.

Israel launched its military incursion into Rafah in early May despite international objections over the safety of civilians sheltering in the city on Gaza's border with Egypt.

A strike that sparked a fire and killed dozens in a displacement camp at the weekend drew a wave of fresh condemnation. Witnesses said yesterday Israeli strikes hit the Rafah area as well as central Gaza's Nuseirat, and an **AFP** correspondent reported intense bombardment in the north.

Strikes on two separate locations killed a total of 11 people overnight, medical sources at a hospital in Deir al-Balah and the Nuseirat refugee camp reported.

Amid stalled diplomatic efforts towards a ceasefire, Hamas said it had informed mediators it would only agree a "comprehensive" truce agreement including a hostage-prisoner swap if Israel halts its "aggression."

On Thursday, Israel said its forces had killed about 300 Palestinians in Rafah since launching its military operation in the city.

A stream of civilians fled Rafah, taking their belongings on their shoulders, in cars or on donkey-drawn carts.



PALESTINIANS carrying some salvaged belongings as they leave the Jabalia refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip after they returned briefly to check on their homes.

Before the Rafah offensive began, the United Nations said up to 1.4 million people were sheltering in the city. Since then, 1 million have fled the area, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, has said. The United Nations has warned of looming famine in Gaza.

The Israeli seizure of the Rafah crossing has further slowed sporadic deliveries of aid for Gaza's 2.4 million people and effectively shuttered the territory's main exit point.

Cyprus, the European Union's easternmost member, said humanitarian aid shipped to Gaza was being kept at sea off the territory's coast, after a US-built pier was damaged in bad weather.

In an interview on French channel *LCI*, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dismissed as "anti-Semitic slander" accusations Israel was deliberately targeting and starving Gazan civilians.

Hundreds of demonstrators rallied late Thursday outside the offices of private broadcaster TF1, LCI's parent company, in Paris's western suburbs, to protest the broadcast.

Wearing black and white *keffiyeh* scarves and waving Palestinian flags, the protesters chanted: "Gaza, Paris is with you."

Israel has killed at least 36,224 people in Gaza, mostly civilians, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

A medical official at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in central Gaza's Deir al-Balah said eight people, including two children, were killed in an airstrike that hit a house in Al-Bureij refugee camp.

Another source at Nuseirat's Al-Awda Hospital reported three deaths in a strike on a car. An *AFP* correspondent saw Israeli military vehicles southwest of Gaza City, in the territory's north.

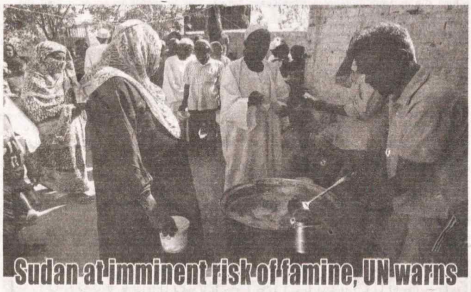
US-British strikes kill 16 in Yemen

TEHRAN (Reuters) - The Houthi's Al-Masirah television said yesterday 16 people had been killed and 35 wounded in US and British strikes on Yemen's Hodeidah province. The outlet reported that the strikes targeted a radio building in Hodeidah's Al-Hawk district and port of Salif.

The US and British militaries said they launched strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen on Thursday as part of efforts to deter the group from further disrupting shipping in the Red Sea. The US Central Command said in a statement that US and British forces had hit 13 targets in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen.

The British defence ministry said the joint operation targeted three locations in the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah, which it said housed drones and surface-to-air weapons. "As ever, the utmost care was taken in planning the strikes to minimise any risk to civilians or non-military infrastructure," the British defence ministry said in a statement. "Conducting the strikes in the hours of darkness should also have mitigated yet further any such risks."

Houthi spokesperson Mohamed Abdelsalam said the strikes constituted a "brutal aggression" against Yemen as "punishment" for its position in support of Gaza.



Sudan at imminent risk of famine, UN warns

GENEVA (Reuters) - The people of Sudan are at "imminent risk of famine", United Nations agencies said yesterday, more than a year into a war between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

Around 18 million people are already acutely hungry, including 3.6 million children who are acutely malnourished, according to a joint statement by UN chiefs including Volker Turk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

"Time is running out for millions of people in Sudan who are at imminent risk of famine, displaced from their lands, living under bombardments, and cut off from humanitarian assistance," the statement added. Fighting broke out in the capital Khartoum in April 2023 and quickly spread across the country, reigniting ethnic bloodshed in the western Darfur region and forcing millions to flee in the world's largest displacement crisis.

"Without an immediate and major step change, we will face a nightmare scenario: A famine will take hold in large parts of the country," read the statement also signed by UN aid chief Martin Griffiths. The war broke out as long-simmering tensions over integrating the RSF with the army came to a head. The UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide said last week there was a risk of genocide in parts of Darfur.

Greece refutes US migrant resettlement report

ATHENS (News Wires) – Greece yesterday dismissed a report that the United States was planning to refer some migrants in Latin America for resettlement in the Mediterranean country in a bid to discourage them from travelling to the US border with Mexico.

CBS News reported on Thursday that the scheme would involve Greece and Italy welcoming a small number of migrants processed at migration offices that the US administration set up last year in four Latin America countries to screen migrants who hope to reach the United States, **Reuters** reported.

"The **CBS** report is untrue. There is neither an agreement nor a request from the US to resettle legal immigrants in Greece," Greece's Migration Minister Dimitris Kairidis wrote on X yesterday.

Greece has been a favoured gateway to the European Union for migrants and refugees from the Middle East, Africa and Asia since 2015, when nearly 1 million people landed on its islands, causing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis and overstretching the country's capacity for hosting them.

Migrant flows through Greece had dropped significantly before resurging in recent months, which has helped decongest the country's migrant camps amid tighter border surveillance by the conservative government of Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

Kairidis said that Greece's migration policy was effective, respecting the law and human life.

South Africa heading for 'coalition country'



A woman walking past election posters in Tembisa, east of Johannesburg.

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — South Africa was heading closer to the reality of a national coalition government for the first time yesterday as partial election results put the ruling African National Congress (ANC) well short of a majority.

With more than half of votes counted across the country's nine provinces, the ANC had received just under 42 per cent of the national vote, according to the early results as counting continued. That represented a huge drop from the 57.5 per cent it received in the last national election in 2019, although the final results from Wednesday's election have not yet been declared.

The commission that runs the election said those would be announced by Sunday, possibly sooner.

The count from more than 13,000 of the 23,000 polling stations raised the strong possibility that the ANC would need a coalition partner to form a government and reelect President Cyril Ramaphosa for a second and final term.

NATO chief disregards Russian escalation threat

PRAGUE (Reuters) - NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg yesterday dismissed warnings by Russian President Vladimir Putin that allowing Kyiv to use Western weapons for strikes inside Russian territory might lead to an escalation.

Speaking on the sidelines of a NATO foreign ministers' meeting in Prague, Stoltenberg said the alliance had heard such warnings many times before.

"This is nothing new. It has been the case for a long time that every time NATO allies are providing support to Ukraine, President Putin is trying to threaten us to not do that," he told reporters.

"And an escalation – well, Russia has escalated by invading another country."

Putin on Tuesday warned NATO members against allowing Ukraine to fire their weapons into Russia and raised anew a risk of nuclear war after several allies lifted restrictions imposed on the use of weapons donated to Kyiv.

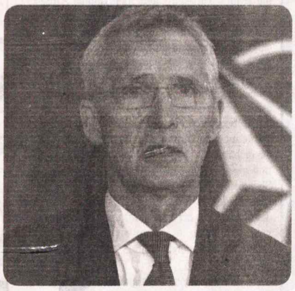
In a marked policy shift, US President Joe Biden has also authorised Kyiv the limited use of US-supplied weapons inside Russia, four officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Thursday.

Biden's decision applies only to targets inside Russia near the border with the Kharkiv region, where an offensive launched by Moscow on May 10 has overrun some villages, they explained. The US is by far the largest arms donor to Kyiv.

Stoltenberg said Ukraine had the right to strike legitimate military targets inside Russia, especially since the borderline and the frontline near Kharkiv were more or less the same, and it was not reasonable to assume Kyiv should not hit back.

"Of course it makes it very hard for Ukraine to defend themselves if they are not allowed to use advanced weapons to repel those attacks," he said.

"Ukraine has the right for self-defence, we have the right to help Ukraine uphold the right for self-defence, and that does not make NATO allies a party to the conflict," Stoltenberg added.



Jens Stoltenberg

Former Iran parl't speaker enters presidential race

DUBAI - Former Iranian parliamentary speaker Ali Larijani, a prominent conservative, was among candidates registering yesterday for an early election next month following the death of President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash, state media reported.

Larijani, an adviser and ally of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, told reporters that he would focus on fixing the economic problems facing Iranians and "resolving (US) sanctions", while maintaining a strong defence.

Larijani was barred from standing in the 2021 presidential race by the clerical-led Guardian Council which vets candidates. But an Iranian insider told Reuters that Larijani decided to run after he was assured by top officials that he would not be disqualified by the hardline council. No reason was given for the change.

Iran on Thursday started the registration of candidates for the June 28 election.

Once seen as a possible successor to Khamenei, Iran's ultimate decision-maker, Raisi's sudden death has triggered a race among hardliners to influence the selection of the country's next leader.

After a five-day registration period, the Guardian Council will vet candidates running for the presidency. Moderate politicians have accused the 12-member body of disqualifying rivals to hardline candidates, who are expected to dominate the race.

N. Korea launches missile warning to South

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea said yesterday it had fired 18 short-range ballistic missiles during a drill as a demonstration of its willingness to launch a pre-emptive strike against South Korea's "gangsters' regime" if necessary to counter an attack.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un guided the firing drill of the 600mm "super-large" multiple rocket launchers on Thursday, state news agency *KCNA* reported. South Korea said it had detected at least 10 short-range ballistic missiles fired by North Korea off its east coast, calling it a possible display for would-be weapons buyers, including Russia.

Russia and North Korea have denied arms deals, which would violate UN embargoes on Pyongyang, but have vowed to deepen co-operation in all sectors.

The launch, following the firing of tactical ballistic missiles and a failed satellite launch this month, was a clear act of provocation that threatens peace on the Korean peninsula, deputy spokesperson for Seoul's unification ministry Kim In-ae told a briefing.

Trump supporters call for riots after verdict

NEW YORK - Supporters of former President Donald Trump, enraged by his conviction on 34 felony counts by a New York jury, flooded pro-Trump websites with calls for riots, revolution and violent retribution.

After Trump became the first US president to be convicted of a crime, his supporters responded with dozens of violent online posts, according to a **Reuters** review of comments on three Trump-aligned websites: the former president's own Truth Social platform, Patriots.Win and the Gateway Pundit.

Some called for attacks on jurors, the execution of the judge, Justice Juan Merchan, or outright civil war and armed insurrection.

"Someone in NY with nothing to lose needs to take care of Merchan," wrote one commentator on Patriots.Win. "Hopefully he gets met with illegals with a machete," the post said in reference to illegal immigrants. On Gateway Pundit, one poster suggested shooting liberals after the verdict. "Time to start capping some leftys," said the post. "This cannot be fixed by voting."

Threats of violence and intimidating rhetoric soared after Trump lost the 2020 election and falsely claimed the vote was stolen. As he campaigns for a second White House term, Trump has baselessly cast the judges and prosecutors in his trials as corrupt tools of the Biden administration, intent on sabotaging his White House bid. His loyalists have responded with a campaign of threats and intimidation targeting judges and court officials.



OUTSIDE Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, US.

"This was a disgrace, this was a rigged trial by a conflicted judge who was corrupt," Trump told reporters afterwards, echoing comments he often made during the trial.

A 12-member jury found Trump guilty on Thursday of falsifying documents to cover up a payment to silence a porn star's account of a sexual encounter ahead of the 2016 election.

Sentencing is set for July 11, days before the Republican Party is scheduled to formally nominate Trump for president ahead of the Nov. 5 election. Trump has denied wrongdoing and is expected to appeal. Trump continued his attacks online after the verdict. On Truth Social, he called Merchan "HIGHLY CONFLICTED" and criticised his jury instructions as unfair. One commentator responded by posting a picture of a hangman's platform and a noose with the caption: "TREASONOUS MOBSTER OF THE JUSTICES SYSTEM!!"

Jacob Ware, a co-author of the book "Guns, and Sedition: Far-Right Terrorism in America", said the violent language used by Trump's followers was testament to the former president's "ironclad ability to mobilise more extreme supporters to action, both at the ballot box and through violence."

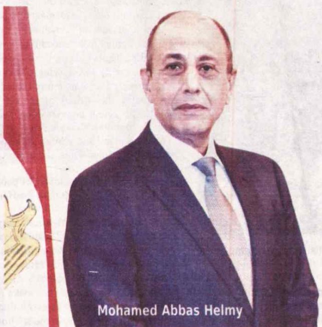
"Until and unless he accepts the process, the extremist reaction to his legal troubles will be militant," said Ware, a research fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. A spokesperson for Truth Social said, "It's hard to believe that *Reuters*, once a respected news service, has fallen so low as to publish such a manipulative, false, defamatory and transparently stupid article as this one purely out of political spite."

All three sites have policies against violent language, and some of the posts were later removed. Representatives of Patriots.Win and Gateway Pundit did not immediately return requests for comment. A Trump spokesperson also did not respond to an email seeking comment.



EgyptAir continues airlift operations for *Hajj* pilgrims

EGYPTAIR has announced the continuation of its airlift operations to transport pilgrims to the holy sites in Saudi Arabia. The national airline began these operations last Wednesday, providing comprehensive services to ensure a smooth journey for all pilgrims.



Mohamed Abbas Helmy



Egypt's Minister of Civil Aviation, Lieutenant General Mohamed Abbas Helmy, has instructed that all necessary measures be taken to facilitate services for the pilgrims. These measures aim to ensure the smooth and regular operation of flights to Jeddah and Medina, operated by EgyptAir, Saudi Airlines, and other carriers during the current season. The minister emphasised that the Ministry of Civil Aviation is working under a meticulously planned strategy, coordinating with all relevant parties to provide the best possible experience for the pilgrims at Cairo International Airport and other Egyptian airports.

EgyptAir has issued travel guidelines for its passengers, advising them to arrive at Egyptian airports four hours before their departure and to be present at the *Hajj* Terminal in Jeddah and Medina airports six hours before their return flights. Each pilgrim is allowed two pieces of luggage, each weighing no more than 23 kilogrammes, and one carry-on bag weighing up to 8 kilogrammes. Excess baggage charges will apply. Additionally, pilgrims are permitted to carry one container of Zamzam water authorised by Saudi authorities, and the use of cloth bags and sacks is strictly prohibited. Passengers must also comply with health regulations and present the required certificates.

Yehia Zakaria, Chairman of EgyptAir Holding Company, expressed his satisfaction with the trust placed by the governments of Guinea and Mali in EgyptAir's capabilities. This year, EgyptAir will transport over 15,000 pilgrims from these two countries to Saudi Arabia for Hajj, reinforcing the airline's leadership in the African market. EgyptAir, established on May 7, 1932, is the first airline in Africa and the seventh in the world.

Zakaria highlighted EgyptAir's commitment to meeting the needs of all its customers, especially during the Hajj season. Captain Mohamed Moussa, Chairman and CEO of EgyptAir Airlines, stated that the airline is honoured to serve African pilgrims this year, whether on regular flights, special services, or transit routes. EgyptAir plans to operate 33 direct special flights from Conakry, Guinea, to Medina, transporting 10,200 pilgrims, with return flights from Jeddah starting June 22 and continuing until July 5. Additionally, 17 special flights will operate directly from Bamako, Mali, to Medina, transporting 5,250 pilgrims, with return flights from Jeddah starting June 22 and continuing until July 3. These flights will be operated using the Boeing B787-9 Dreamliner, known for its high levels of comfort and luxury, accommodating 309 passengers.

Simultaneously, Cairo Airport Company has completed all necessary preparations for the *Hajj* season, particularly in and around the seasonal terminal dedicated to EgyptAir's *Hajj* and Umrah flights, and Terminal 2, which handles Saudi Airlines flights.

Preparations include deploying public relations teams from Cairo Airport Company and EgyptAir to work around the clock in the departure and arrival halls, assigning staff to assist passengers in the passport control area, and providing ample porters and customer service personnel to manage the flow of pilgrims. Special provisions have also been made for wheelchair services for individuals with disabilities and the elderly, and "self-service" baggage carts have been made available.

The comprehensive measures reflect the collaborative efforts to ensure that the pilgrimage season runs smoothly, providing a comfortable and efficient travel experience for all *Hajj* pilgrims.



National carrier showcases services at Riyadh Travel

EGYPTAIR participated in the Riyadh Travel Fair (RTF) held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as part of the Ministry of Civil Aviation's vision to enhance Egypt's position on the international aviation and tourism map.

The company's participation aimed to expand and develop within Arab, regional, and international markets, forging new avenues of co-operation with global airlines and leading tourism companies. The focus was on boosting air traffic to and from Egypt's tourist destinations while highlighting its unique attractions. EgyptAir also sought to exchange expertise, stay abreast of the latest technological advancements, and adopt best global practices in the civil aviation industry.

During the fair, EgyptAir held a series of coordination meetings with representatives from airports, airlines, and travel agencies from various countries to discuss different forms of co-operation and explore the possibility of opening direct and indirect routes in Egypt and the Middle East region.

Visitors to EgyptAir's pavilion were invited to explore the company's offerings and learn about the available tourism opportunities in Egypt.

This initiative aligns with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and its subsidiaries' commitment to enhancing Egypt's position on the global tourism map and supporting the national economy by revitalising the aviation and tourism sectors.

Cairo, Shanghai airports sign MoU to boost passenger, cargo operations

A HIGH-LEVEL delegation from Egypt's Ministry of Civil Aviation, including senior officials from EgyptAir, Cairo International Airport, and tourism sectors, participated in the ITB China travel trade show held at the Shanghai World Expo and Convention Centre.



During the event, the chairmen of EgyptAir Holding Company and Cairo Airport Company met with the director of Shanghai Airport, leading to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Cairo International Airport and Shanghai Airport.

The agreement aims to enhance passenger and cargo operations and support the transportation of passengers and goods between the two cities. It also seeks to bolster air freight operations for passenger flights and improve the transit passenger experience at both airports.



The two parties agreed to launch joint marketing campaigns and hold regular meetings to promote the aviation market between Cairo and Shanghai. They also plan to share market insights and data, exchange expertise, and provide training to improve technical and administrative standards.

In addition, EgyptAir signed MoUs with Dongli Group, one of China's largest ticket booking companies, and Meiya Air Service, the leading travel agency in China, designating Meiya as EgyptAir's official agent across China.

The EgyptAir pavilion at the ITB China saw the signing of these agreements, along with coordination meetings with tourism and travel agents to showcase EgyptAir's latest services and new flight routes. These efforts aim to promote Egypt as a preferred travel destination, attracting large numbers of global tourists annually.

Yehia Zakaria, Chairman of EgyptAir Holding Company, emphasised that China is one of the world's largest tourism markets. EgyptAir's participation in ITB China provides an opportunity to reach numerous clients and travel agents, promoting Egyptian tourist destinations and building new partnerships.

EgyptAir's CEO highlighted the strategic focus on the Chinese market, noting the recent launch of the Cairo/Shanghai flight route to meet growing demand. By 2028, EgyptAir plans to expand its routes to China to six destinations.

Civil Aviation Authority collaborates with international organisations

THE Civil Aviation Authority, led by Pilot Amr El-Sharkawy, recently hosted a series of significant events aimed at enhancing aviation safety and security in Egypt and the Middle East region.

In coordination with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the Civil Aviation Authority organised a specialised training course on risk management and threat assessment for personnel from various security agencies in the civil aviation sector. The course focused on continuously developing the skills of aviation sector employees and enhancing their capabilities to meet international safety and security standards.

Pilot Amr El-Sharkawy, President of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority, expressed gratitude to the ICAO Middle East Regional Office for their supportive efforts in training and exchanging expertise among aviation personnel.

Additionally, the authority hosted a workshop on regulating hot air balloons and issuing certificates in collaboration with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The workshop, under the auspices of the Mediterranean Aviation Project, brought together 40 representatives from the Civil Aviation Authority, local balloon operators, and regulatory bodies from Jordan, Morocco, and Spain. Discussions aimed to enhance regulatory alignment and safety standards across various aviation domains.

Furthermore, the authority organised a workshop titled "Aviation Safety Management System (SMS) and Flight Data Analysis (FDA)" in collaboration with Airbus and the ICAO Middle East Regional Office. The workshop, attended by 60 aviation specialists, explored fundamental concepts of safety management systems and flight data analysis to improve aviation safety.

Pilot Amr El-Sharkawy emphasised that these events align with the Ministry of Civil Aviation's commitment to developing human resources and promoting safety and quality standards in the aviation industry, in cooperation with international organisations and leading aviation entities.

Moreover, in the spirit of continuous coordination and co-operation, a delegation from the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority participated in the first workshop on "Auditing and Inspection Techniques" in collaboration with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in Larnaca, Cyprus.

